# AVATAR

The Last Airbender

Show #994

"The Day of Black Sun"

**Part 1**
Show #310
BOOK THREE: Fire
CHAPTER TEN: "The Day of Black Sun, Part 1: The Invasion"

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**Part 2**
BOOK THREE: Fire
CHAPTER ELEVEN: "The Day of the Black Sun, Part 2: The Eclipse"

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## ACT ONE

**EXT. BLACK CLIFFS - EARLY MORNING** *

It's the morning of the eclipse -- the big day. (NOTE: this is the same location as 3.09.) Katara, Sokka, and Toph sit atop the high cliffs, overlooking the ocean. Sokka is hunched over, studying a bunch of maps that are laid out on the ground in front of him.

Aang walks up behind them, stretching after a good night of sleep. Momo jumps on his shoulder.

AANG
Top of the morning, Momo!

KATARA
Sounds like you slept well.

AANG
Like a baby moose-lion. I'm ready to face the Firelord.

TOPH
So what's your strategy for taking him down? Gonna get your glow on and hit him with a little Avatar State action?

AANG
I can't. When Azula shot me with lightning, my seventh chakra was locked, cutting off my connection to all the cosmic energy in the universe.

TOPH
You know what I just heard? Blah, blah... spiritual mumbo jumbo... blah, blah... something about space.

Katara looks out to sea and notices a bank of fog rolling toward them.

KATARA
Oh no. Sokka, do you think the fog will delay the invasion?

SOKKA
No. That <u>is</u> the invasion!

The fog begins to clear, revealing five Water Tribe ships sailing their way.

**EXT. BLACK CLIFFS - HARBOR - MORNING** *

The ships are docked in the secluded harbor. Water Tribe Warriors and Earth Kingdom soldiers unload supplies. (DESIGN NOTE: The invasion force is made up of characters from past episodes -- the Resistance from 2.03, Swampbenders from 2.04, and Waterbenders from the Northern Tribe.) Katara and Sokka run up to Hakoda and hug him. Bato stands nearby.

KATARA
You made it, Dad!

SOKKA
Were you able to locate everyone I told you to find?

HAKODA
I did. But I'm a little worried, Sokka. Some of these men aren't exactly the warrior type.

Just then, DUE, THO, HUU, and some other SWAMPBENDERS step off the ship. Due (the tall one) looks around at the surroundings, like a country bumpkin in the big city.

DUE
Hoo-wee! This place ain't nothin like the swamp! What you reckon' that is, Tho? Some sort of Fire Nation explodin' trap what eats ya?

He points to an ordinary rock.

THO
It's just a rock, Due.

DUE
(scratching his head)
Well, I'll be...

HAKODA
(to Sokka)
Is it just me, or are those fellas a little loose in the leaf-hat?

BATO
I just wish they would wear pants.

Huu, the spiritual one, overhears this and steps forward.

HUU
Pants are an illusion, and so is death.

Hakoda and Sokka give him a dumbfounded look, then look at each other. Sokka just shrugs.

HARU approaches Katara, Aang, and Toph.

HARU
Hi, Katara.

KATARA
Haru! It's so good to see you!

Katara hugs Haru.

AANG
Toph, this is Haru. When we met him, his town was controlled by the Fire Nation so he had to hide his Earthbending.

TOPH
Nice to meet you. I can relate.

HARU
Katara inspired me and my father to take back our village.

TYRO walks up behind Haru and puts a hand on his shoulder.

TYRO
You helped us find our courage, Katara. Now we're here to help you.

Katara smiles proudly. Toph senses something and takes a defensive stance.

TOPH
No way, is that...?

Reveal THE BOULDER and THE HIPPO walking toward Toph. The hulking Hippo picks up Toph and gives her a big bear hug.

THE HIPPO
Hippo happy to see Blind Bandit!

He holds Toph out at arms length.

TOPH
You guys here for a rematch?

THE BOULDER
Negatory. The Boulder and the Hippo no longer fight for others' entertainment. Now, we fight for our kingdom!

TOPH
Sweet.

Sokka looks around, taking stock of all the troops.

Suddenly, a small EXPLOSION rocks one of the ships. THE MECHANIST stumbles out of the smoke, followed by TEO, THE DUKE, and PIPSQUEAK. They are all covered in soot and an UNIDENTIFIABLE GOO.

SOKKA
Was that a new invention?

THE MECHANIST
Yes. But unfortunately, the incendiary capabilities of peanut sauce proved to be a failure.

SOKKA
You're making peanut sauce bombs?

PIPSQUEAK
They're destructive...

39A THE DUKE 39A
And delicious!

Pipsqueak, the Duke, and Teo slurp all the peanut sauce off their faces (with a little help from Momo!)

SOKKA
(to Mechanist)
Were you able to complete work on the plans I sent you?

THE MECHANIST
Yes, I was. And I think the Fire Nation will be quite surprised.

TEO
Aang -- my Dad and I made this for you!

Teo presents Aang with a new staff. Aang opens it, revealing an UPDATED GLIDER (it has a new wing shape and Air Nation symbols on the wings.)

AANG
(impressed)
A new glider! This is amazing!

THE MECHANIST
And as a special feature, I added a snack compartment!

AANG
(not as impressed)
Oh. Well... I'm sure that will come in handy.

**INT. FIRE NATION PRISON - MORNING** *

Uncle sits in his cell, looking haggard and tired. WARDEN POON (from 3.04) sits on a bench in front of Uncle's cell, taunting him.

WARDEN POON
I bet you're tired of being in this cell, old man. Well, too bad. You're never stepping outside these walls again.

A kind, female guard in her 30's, MING, enters with Uncle's breakfast.

MING
Breakfast.

Warden Poon gets up and heads for the door, but he can't resist getting in one last parting shot.

WARDEN POON
Careful, Ming. Don't get too close. His stench'll knock you right out. (LAUGHS)

Ming watches him leave, disgusted. She passes Uncle his food through the bars.

MING
I snuck in some White Jade tea. I know you like rare teas.

Uncle INHALES DEEPLY, savoring the scent of the tea.

UNCLE
Thank you, Ming. Ever since I was put in here, you've been very kind to me.

Ming smiles and exits. Uncle smiles and sips his tea.

**EXT. BLACK CLIFFS - HARBOR - MORNING** *

All the troops sit on the beach, in visually similar groups. (ie. Warriors together, Earthbenders together, Swampbenders together, etc.) They all eat a hearty sweetcake breakfast. A nervous-looking Sokka stands off to the side with Hakoda, holding an armful of maps. Hakoda puts a comforting hand on Sokka's shoulder.

HAKODA
Don't worry, you'll do great.

Sokka steps out onto a rock stage to present his invasion plan. Sokka pitches his plan very hesitantly and nervously.

SOKKA
Good morning, everyone.

Sokka stumbles, dropping all the maps. He frantically tries to gather them.

SOKKA (cont'd)
Um... so as you know, today we're invading the Fire Nation. I mean, I know you know that, because otherwise why else would you be here? (NERVOUS LAUGH)
(recovering abruptly)
Anyway...

Sokka looks at the crowd's vacant expressions, and becomes even more nervous. He holds a MAP OF THE FIRE NATION upside down and points at an island.

SOKKA (cont'd)
The Firelord's palace is here. No, wait, wait...
(turns map around and points again)
It's here. And there's an eclipse today and Aang's gonna fight the Firelord and... and the Firebenders won't have any fire to use, so... that's good for us. And, um...

The troops look very confused.

SOKKA (cont'd)
I'm sorry. Let me start at the beginning.
(very flat and stiff)
(MORE)

SOKKA (cont'd)
Katara and I discovered Aang frozen in an iceberg now I didn't like Aang at first but I grew to love him over time then we went to the Southern Air Temple where Aang used to live and then we met Suki who is a Kyoshi warrior...

As Sokka continues to ramble, we ANGLE ON: Katara and Aang.

KATARA
Wow. When he says beginning, he means the beginning beginning.

59A SOKKA 59A
(under Katara)
...she dressed me like a woman and then she kissed me and then Aang's friend was a crazy old king and then...

SOKKA (cont'd)
...Katara got Haru arrested and then now he's grown a moustache which if you look into the front row you can see it--

Seeing his son in trouble, Hakoda steps onto the stage.

HAKODA
Thank you, Sokka.
(sotto, to Sokka)
It's okay, why don't you take a break.
(to the troops)
Let me just clarify a few points for everyone.

Sokka shuffles off stage, feeling like a failure. Hakoda sets up the Fire Nation map on a rock and uses it to illustrate the plan. Sokka watches from the sidelines.

HAKODA (cont'd)
Today is the Day of Black Sun. And want to thank you all for your self-sacrifice and your courage.
(turns to the map)
There are two steps to the invasion -- a naval stage, and then a land stage. To gain sea access to the Fire Nation capital, we have to get past our first major obstacle, here -- "The Great Gates of Azulon."

Hakoda flips to a more detailed map of the Fire Nation royal plaza/capital city.

HAKODA (cont'd)
Next, we hit the land. And we hit hard. We must fight past their battlements and secure the plaza tower. Once we do that, it's up to the Royal Palace. At that point, the eclipse will begin...

The Boulder raises his hand.

THE BOULDER
Excuse me! The Boulder is confused. Isn't the point to invade during the eclipse, when the Firebenders are powerless?

HAKODA
The eclipse only lasts eight minutes -- not enough time for the whole invasion. And the Royal Palace is heavily guarded by Firebenders, so that's where we'll need the eclipse advantage the most.
(beat)
When this is finished, the Avatar will have defeated the Firelord, we will have control of the Fire Nation capital, and this war will be over!

EVERYONE
(INSPIRED CHEERS)

DISSOLVE TO:

**EXT. BLACK CLIFFS - HARBOR - MORNING** *

PREPARING FOR BATTLE MONTAGE: We see all the characters suit up for battle -- Katara (in painted lady makeup) loads up with water skins; Toph and the Earthbenders suit up with leather armor; Hakoda puts on his wolf helmet (he is dressed in full wolf armor); Teo tests out his modified wheelchair, which is now armored and battle ready; the Water Tribe warriors (also in wolf armor) put Appa's battle helmet on him -- Appa is also fully armored and battle ready!

Finally, we see Aang (in a cool, new battle-ready outfit.) He squats down by the water.

He uses a knife to cut off the big chunks of his hair, then uses a stone tool (from 2.15) to shave off the rest. Aang is bald again. The Avatar is back!

MATCH CUT TO:

**INT. ZUKO'S ROOM - THE SAME TIME** *

CLOSE ON: Zuko's head. Zuko takes off his topknot and lets his hair down. Then, Zuko takes his armor off and lays it on his bed. His movements are calm and deliberate -- almost ceremonial. Then Zuko sits at his desk and begins writing a letter.

**EXT. BLACK CLIFFS - MORNING** *

Sokka (in wolf armor, but holding his helmet) stands alone on the cliffs, looking down at the boats and troops. Aang walks up behind him.

AANG
We've been looking everywhere for you. The boats are ready to leave.

SOKKA
I messed up, Aang.

AANG
What?

SOKKA
The invasion plan was my moment of truth -- and I completely flubbed it. I just... fell apart.

AANG
Sokka, that speech wasn't your moment of truth. That was just public speaking. And nobody's really good at that.

SOKKA
My dad is. He explained the plan perfectly and inspired everyone.
(beat)
Like a real leader should.

AANG
Look, your moment of truth isn't going to be in front of some map. It's going to be out there, on the battlefield.

SOKKA
You seem so confident about everything. How do you know we're going to win?

Aang thinks about this for a beat.

AANG
Because I already failed the world once at Ba Sing Se. I won't let myself fail again.

**EXT. GREAT GATES OF AZULON - DAY** *

TELESCOPE P.O.V.: We see the Great Gates of Azulon, which is actually two tall, metal statue towers that look like Firelord Azulon. One statue is the warrior Azulon, and the other is the peaceful monarch.

BATO (V.O.)
There they are. The Great Gates of Azulon.

KATARA
I don't see any gates.

HAKODA
Katara, you and the Swampbenders whip up a fog cover.

THO
We'll sneak by them statues just like we sneaked by that Fire Navy blockade!

The Swampbenders begin bending up some fog.

CUT TO:

**EXT. GREAT GATES OF AZULON - MOMENTS LATER** *

The fog-covered ships close in on the towers. Hakoda stands near the bow of the ship, Katara and the Swampbenders are behind him, Waterbending the fog.

HAKODA
Keep it up! We're almost through!

Just as Hakoda's ship nears the towers, Firebenders ignite a hidden cable that stretches between the towers. A giant fire wall ignites right in front of the boats!

**END ACT ONE**

## ACT TWO

**EXT. GREAT GATES OF AZULON - DAY** *

The boats careen toward the fire wall. Aang runs across the deck and leaps off the bow, high into the air. He spins in mid-air and swings his new staff, sending a huge WINDBLAST at the boats' sails. The wind pushes the boats away from the fire wall, but also blows away the fog cover in the process. Fire Nation jet skis cruise out of the towers, toward the ships.

HAKODA
(ordering the troops)
Everyone below deck!
(to Sokka)
Let's hope your invention works.

The troops scramble and rush below deck as the jet skis cruise up to the ships and circle them.

SMASH CUT TO:

**EXT. HAKODA'S SHIP - MOMENTS LATER** *

The domestic forces storm the deck.

**INT. HAKODA'S SHIP - CONTINUOUS** *

The domestic forces enter various rooms below deck. The ship appears to be abandoned. A MALE SOLDIER approaches the officer.

MALE SOLDIER
No one's on board, sir.

FEMALE OFFICER
Where did they go?

SMASH CUT TO:

**EXT. OCEAN - UNDERWATER - THAT MOMENT** *

Five WATERBENDING POWERED SUBMARINES stealthily sail underneath the fire wall, undetected. Surrounded by an air bubble, Aang and Appa sail underwater with the subs.

**INT. LEAD SUBMARINE - CONTINUOUS** *

Sokka, Toph, Hakoda, and the Mechanist are all in the lead sub (including everyone else who was on Hakoda's ship.) Four Waterbenders (Katara, Huu, Due, and Tho) stand on either side of the vessel (two on each side.) They bend the water past the sub, propelling it through the ocean.

HAKODA
You've really outdone yourself this time, son.

Toph is hunched over, looking seasick.

TOPH
Yeah, congratulations, Sokka, you managed to invent a worse way of travel than flying.

95A THE DUKE 95A
Helmet?

SOKKA
(acting modest)
Well, I just came up with the idea, the Mechanist did all the work.

THE MECHANIST
Don't sell yourself short, my boy. It was your idea to use Waterbending to make the subs sink and float! Brilliant! Though your original designs were a bit difficult to decipher.

The Mechanist unrolls Sokka's sub design. It is drawn in the typical Sokka/John O'Bryan style. Pipsqueak (with The Duke on his shoulders) leans in for a look.

THE MECHANIST (cont'd)
Unfortunately, there is one problem I couldn't fix. The subs have a limited air supply. Before we land on the beaches, we'll need to resurface.

Off Sokka's worried expression...

**INT. FIRE NATION PRISON - DAY** *

Guard Ming enters Uncle's cell and pushes Uncle's lunch through the bars.

MING
Lunchtime, General Iroh.
(sotto)
And this time, I brought you an extra bowl of rice.

UNCLE
Thank you, Ming. Your little gestures of kindness have made my days in prison bearable.
(beat)
I think you should take the rest of the day off.

Ming looks confused.

MING
What?

UNCLE
You don't look well. Maybe you should go home and rest.

MING
No, I feel fine.

UNCLE
(deadly serious)
Trust me. It's better that you're not here this afternoon.

Ming sees how serious Uncle is. She nods and exits.

**EXT. OCEAN - CONTINUOUS** *

The five subs float in place around Appa. The troops stand on top of the subs, stretching their legs and breathing fresh air. Aang is on the top of Hakoda's sub.

Aang turns to Sokka, Katara, and Toph.

AANG
So... this is it, huh?

SOKKA
Are you ready for the Fire Nation to know the Avatar's alive?

AANG
I'm ready.

Sokka gives Aang a firm, Water Tribe handshake. Aang pulls him in for a hug. Katara, Toph, and Momo join in.

TOPH
I hope you kick some serious Firelord butt, Twinkle Toes.

Hakoda addresses the troops once more.

HAKODA
Everyone, listen up! The next time we resurface, it'll be on the beaches. So stay alert and fight smart! Now, break time's over! Back in the subs!

The troops all climb back in the subs, leaving Katara and Aang alone. They look at each other for a beat, neither one sure what to say.

KATARA
Aang, I--

AANG
Katara, I--

AANG
You go first.

KATARA
We've been through so many things together. And I've seen you grow up so much. You're not that little goofy kid I found in the iceberg anymore. I guess what I'm trying to say is... I'm really proud of you.

AANG
Everything's going to be different after today, isn't it?

KATARA
Yes, it is.

AANG
What if... what if I don't come back?

Suddenly Aang looks very serious.

KATARA
Aang, don't say that, of course you'll--

Aang pulls her in and KISSES HER ON THE LIPS! Katara doesn't pull away. After the kiss ends, Aang pulls away and opens his glider dramatically. In heroic, epic fashion, Katara watches as Aang flies away on his glider, to meet his destiny. Katara smiles.

SOKKA
Katara, what are you doing? It's time to submerge!

KATARA
(snapping out of it)
What? Right. I'm on it.

Katara lifts herself onto Appa with some Waterbending. The subs submerge. Katara bends the water around Appa, and they submerge too.

**INT. MAI'S ROOM - DAY** *

Zuko enters Mai's empty room. ANGLE ON: A picture of Mai and Zuko near Mai's bedside. In it, they are cuddling in front of a sunset on the beach, like a happy, romantic couple. But neither of them smile. (The picture should be in the same style as the sepia slides from 3.05.) Zuko picks up the picture and looks at it for a beat.

ZUKO
I'm sorry, Mai.

Zuko puts the picture down and pulls out the letter that he wrote earlier. He places it on Mai's pillow, and leaves.

**EXT. SKY ABOVE MAIN FIRE NATION ISLAND - DAY** *

Aang flies low and stealthy around a volcano. He looks serious and determined. But then his STOMACH GRUMBLES. Aang reaches into the snack pouch in the glider's wing and munches on some nuts.

AANG
What do you know. It did come in handy.

As Aang flies around the volcano, he sees the royal palace caldera up ahead.

**INT. HAKODA'S SUBMARINE - DAY** *

HAKODA'S PERISCOPE P.O.V.: Hakoda sees the fortified wall that protects the capital city. Battlements with crossbows line the wall.

HAKODA
Everyone in position. Earthbenders -- into your tanks. This is going to be a rough ride.

The Earthbenders (including Toph) rush through a door in the front of the sub. The Mechanist nervously takes a seat.

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL CITY - DAY** *

From high on the wall, Fire Nation soldiers spot the subs' shadows beneath the surface. They fire GIANT HARPOONS attached to chains from massive crossbows atop the battlements.

FROM UNDERWATER: the crossbow chains shoot past the subs, "Private Ryan"-style. Four of the subs (and Appa) swerve to avoid the attack, but one of the subs is hit! The harpoon punctures the hull and begins pulling it toward the surface.

**INT. SUBMARINE - CONTINUOUS** *

Everyone reels from the attack. Some Waterbenders patch up the hole with some ice, but the sub is still being pulled up.

**EXT. OCEAN - UNDERWATER/ABOVE WATER - CONTINUOUS** *

Katara sees the sub being pulled up. She and Appa fly up out of the ocean in a dramatic explosion of water. In mid-air, Katara uses water to SLICE THROUGH the metal chain, setting the sub free. Seeing Appa flying at them, the battlement soldiers run away. The helmeted Appa rams the battlement with all his force, breaking the battlement off the wall and into the ocean.

**EXT. OCEAN - UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS** *

From underwater, we see that the metal wall extends to the bottom of the ocean. The subs sail toward it.

**INT. HAKODA'S SUBMARINE - CONTINUOUS** *

PERISCOPE P.O.V.: There is a thick, metal grate in the center of the wall.

HAKODA
Ready the torpedo!

ANGLE ON: An ICE TORPEDO inside the torpedo bay. The Mechanist and Teo pour some blasting jelly into a hollowed out section of the torpedo and then light a fuse. Huu freezes water over it, covering the fuse and blasting jelly.

136A HAKODA (cont'd) 136A
Launch!

Then he does a Waterbending move that launches the torpedo.

**EXT. OCEAN - UNDERWATER - CONTINUOUS** *

The ice torpedo rockets out of the lead sub. The torpedo cruises toward the metal grate and EXPLODES, creating a huge hole. The subs sail through the hole and emerge on...

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL CITY - BEACHES - CONTINUOUS** *

In a D-Day style scene, the subs surface on the black beach. The front of the subs open up, and EARTHBENDING POWERED TANKS roll out. Piloted by 4 Earthbenders, each tank is multi-segmented, allowing it to navigate uneven terrain. Hakoda leads the rest of the troops out of the subs. They charge onto the sand as explosions erupt around them.

WATER TRIBE WARRIORS
(BATTLE CRY)

**END ACT TWO**

## ACT THREE

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL CITY - BATTLEMENT - DAY** *

ANGLE ON: One of the many BATTLEMENTS that line the surrounding walls and cliffs. A Firebender ignites the tip of the arrow on a giant crossbow weapon. Another soldier aims the weapon at the tanks on the beach and fires. The blasting jelly-tipped arrow shoots through the air and explodes in front of one of the tanks.

**INT. EARTHBENDING TANK - CONTINUOUS** *

BOOM!! The tank and the four Earthbenders inside (Toph, The Boulder, Haru, and Resistance Leader) shake from the impact of the explosion. A hatch in the side of the tank opens and The Boulder fires several rocks at the battlement.

**EXT. BATTLEMENT - CONTINUOUS** *

The Firebender ignites the tip of another arrow on the crossbow, but the rocks smash into it, breaking the weapon. The Firebender and the soldier look at the blasting jelly-tipped arrow (which is still burning), then look at each other, then run out of the battlement just before it EXPLODES!

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL CITY - BEACHES - CONTINUOUS** *

In a wide shot, we see the Earthbending tanks progress from the beach to the plaza. Appa flies in and lands near the tanks. Katara jumps off and joins Hakoda, Sokka, and the other troops who follow closely behind. Crossbow arrows explode all around them.

As the troops advance, the supply doors on either side of the plaza open. FIRE NATION TANKS and FIREBENDER MOUNTED BATTLE RHINOS block the invasion forces' path and open fire. The Earthbender tanks return rock-fire, protecting the tank-less troops. Just when it looks like things can't get any worse, the supply doors closest to the beach open up, revealing more tanks and Firebender mounted battle rhinos. Now the invasion troops are completely BOXED IN and SURROUNDED by the Fire Nation.

From his battle wheelchair, Teo launches some smoke bombs at the Fire Nation troops, creating a smokescreen. Then Sokka, Katara, Hakoda, and the Water Tribe Warriors charge at the Firebenders/rhinos with their spears (with their wolf-armor, they look like a pack of wild wolves.) Sokka deftly dodges a Firebender's blasts and gets close enough to knock the Firebender off his mount. Then Sokka jumps onto the rhino! He sees Hakoda in a SPEAR FIGHT with a Domestic Forces soldier, when a Firebender approaches from behind.

Hakoda turns in time to avoid the 2nd Firebender's blast. Hakoda performs an amazing spear maneuver that disarms the soldier. Then Hakoda picks up the spear and fights the Firebender with a DOUBLE SPEAR SET!! (if such a thing exists...) A couple more Firebenders attack Hakoda. He holds them off, but just barely. Sokka pulls out his sword and rides to Hakoda's rescue, charging the rhino at the Firebenders. The Firebenders jump out of the way as Hakoda leaps onto Sokka's rhino and out of danger.

CUT TO:

The Swampbenders blast the tanks with water, which knocks the tanks back, but doesn't stop them. Soon, the tanks surround them. Tho looks around, and realizes that someone is missing.

THO
We're a man down! Where in tarnation is Huu?!

From behind the tanks, a giant SEAWEED MONSTER rises out of the ocean (which is really just Huu using seaweed instead of vines.) Huu lashes out with his seaweed arms, knocking tanks into the ocean.

DUE
Hey Huu! Where you been?

Huu bends open an opening in the seaweed so we can see his face.

HUU
Communin' with nature. Takes a while to collect this much seaweed!

Huu/Seaweed Monster jumps into the battle, knocking back soldiers and Firebenders with his seaweed strikes.

CUT TO:

The Hippo and Tyro Earthbend large earth slabs on either side of the Earthbender tanks, Appa, and the troops to protect them from the blasting jelly-tipped arrows. But the battlements continue to barrage the invasion force, destroying the protective earth slabs. Hakoda and Sokka watch from their rhino.

SOKKA
Dad, look out!

HAKODA
Sokka, we've got to take out those battlements. It's our only chance.

SOKKA
I've got an idea.

SMASH CUT TO:

**EXT. SKY ABOVE ROYAL PLAZA - MOMENTS LATER** *

Sokka, Katara, and Hakoda fly on Appa just above the battlements. Sokka hangs off Appa's horn, holding out his space sword. As Appa passes by the front of a battlement, Sokka swings his sword, cutting off the front of the crossbow. Hakoda chucks a smoke bombs into the opening in one of the battlements, forcing the soldiers inside to abandon their post. Next, Katara uses the water cannons on the side of Appa to shoot water at a battlement. The force of the water blasts off the roof of the battlement and destroys the crossbow. The Firebenders in the remaining battlements turn their attention to Appa and begin Firebending at him. Appa dodges most of the blasts, but gets hit a few times (but he's okay because of his leather armor.)

Hakoda ducks as a fireball flies over his head.

Sokka steers Appa toward the cliffs above the plaza. They land and jump off Appa.

HAKODA
You two take out that battlement. I got this one. Watch each other's backs.

Hakoda heads off to one battlement while Katara and Sokka run to another one nearby. Sokka cuts the lock on the battlement's door and kicks it open. Katara Waterbends into the battlement freezing the two soldiers to the wall. Then Sokka slices the crossbow mechanism in half with his sword.

Sokka and Katara rush back outside where they witness the following: Hakoda slides down the roof of a battlement and swings into the front opening. They hear off-screen sounds of struggling and fighting, followed by an explosion. Smoke spews out the front of the battlement. There is a long beat.

KATARA
Dad?

SOKKA
Dad!

The siblings rush over to the battlement. As they arrive, the back door busts open, smoke pouring out. Hakoda stumbles out of the smoke, COUGHING and clutching his side. His clothes are burnt and tattered. Sokka catches his father as he collapses.

**INT. ZUKO'S ROOM - THE SAME TIME** *

CLOSE ON: A picture of Zuko's mom, Ursa. Reveal that Zuko is kneeling in front of a small shrine in honor of his mother.

ZUKO
I know I've made some bad choices. But today, I'm going to set things right.

With that, Zuko sheathes his swords, picks up his bag, and takes one last look around his room. In a shot reminiscent of his mom's departure in 2.07, Zuko exits, pulling his cloak over his head. (NOTE: during this scene, we hear battle sounds off in this distance, but Zuko doesn't react to them.)

**EXT. BEACHES NEAR SUBMARINES - DAY** *

Katara and Sokka carry their father to a safe area and lie him down (Appa is nearby.) Katara bends some water and begins healing him, moving glowing water around his rib cage. Sokka nervously watches over them.

KATARA
How does that feel, dad?

HAKODA
A little better. (PAINED GROAN) I need to get back to the troops.

KATARA
You're hurt... badly. You can't fight anymore.

HAKODA
Everyone's counting on me to lead this mission, Katara. I won't let them down.

Hakoda tries to sit up, but is overcome with pain and has to lie back down. Katara continues healing him.

SOKKA
Can't you heal him any faster?

KATARA
I'm doing everything I can!

Sokka looks at his dad, wincing in pain, then to the battle raging on the plaza. Sokka lowers his head and closes his eyes. He knows what he must do.

SOKKA
I'll do it.

KATARA
No offense, Sokka, but you're not exactly Mister Healing Hands.

SOKKA
No. I'll lead the invasion force.

Hakoda and Katara look up at Sokka, surprised.

KATARA
Don't be crazy, Sokka.

SOKKA
Maybe I am a little crazy. But the eclipse is about to start and we need to be up that volcano by the time it does.

HAKODA
You can do this. I'm proud of you, son.

KATARA
I still think you're crazy. But I'm proud of you too.

Sokka climbs onto Appa and heads off to the battlefield.

163A SOKKA 163A
Yip yip!

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL CITY - PLAZA - MOMENTS LATER** *

It's battle chaos. In the center of the plaza, Fire Nation tanks continue to barrage the Earthbender tanks with fire, while the tank-less troops battle Firebenders. The troops are scattered and disorganized without their leader. Sokka flies into the battle on Appa. As he lands, Appa uses his tail to Airbend a few tanks away. As explosions continue to erupt, Sokka stands on Appa's head and rallies the troops like a confident leader.

SOKKA
Listen up, everyone! I want the tanks in wedge formation! Warriors and benders in the middle!
(MORE)

SOKKA (cont'd)
We're taking that tower and heading for the royal palace!

The Earthbender tanks move into position. Sokka and Appa (who are at the front of the formation) charge forward.

SOKKA (cont'd)
CHARGE!

**EXT. ROYAL PALACE GROUNDS - THE SAME TIME** *

Aang crests over the Royal Crater and stealthily swoops down toward the palace grounds. He lands on the roof of a building, being careful not to be seen. He peeks over the edge of the roof and sees the Royal Palace up ahead. He checks to see if the coast is clear. It is. He leaps from rooftop to rooftop. After a moment, Aang realizes that the streets are eerily empty. No one is around.

AANG
That's strange.

Aang abandons his 'stealthy' moves -- he jumps down in the middle of the street and simply runs up to the front of the palace.

**INT. ROYAL PALACE - MOMENTS LATER** *

Aang peeks around a column, checking if the coast is clear. AANG'S P.O.V.: The long hallway is completely empty. Aang calls out from behind the column.

AANG
The Avatar is back!

No answer. Aang thinks for a beat.

AANG (cont'd)
Hello? Anyone home?

Aang quickly ducks behind the column, expecting Firebenders to rush out. But again, nothing. Aang looks really worried.

He sprints down the hallway. ANGLE ON: The portraits of Firelords Sozin, Azulon, and Ozai (from 3.06.) Aang runs past them.

**EXT. ROYAL PALACE TOWER - THE SAME TIME** *

Like caterpillars, the Earthbender tanks scale up the platforms. ANGLE ON: Toph and Haru Earthbending inside their tank.

As they approach a group of Firebenders, Toph jumps out of the tank and rips up the metal plates underneath their feet, sending them tumbling away. She gets back in her tank.

ANGLE ON: The Hippo, who chews up a handful of rocks and spits them like pellets at the Fire Nation soldiers, driving them back. He protects Bato and some Water Tribe Warriors who pack blasting jelly at the base of the tower wall.

SMASH CUT TO:

**EXT. ROYAL PALACE TOWER - REVERSE ANGLE - CONTINUOUS** *

BOOM! The wall explodes and the invasion troops and tanks swarm into the courtyard area. The Fire Nation forces fall back.

TYRO
The Fire Nation's falling back!

BATO
Sokka, we're on our way to victory.

Sokka smiles proudly.

**INT. FIRELORD'S WAR ROOM - MOMENTS LATER**

Aang busts into the war room and looks around. His suspicions are confirmed -- the Firelord's throne is empty and there is no fire burning in front of the throne. Aang walks toward the center of the room, drops his staff, and falls to his knees. He is almost on the verge of tears.

AANG
(to himself)
No, no, no...
(to the heavens)
Firelord Ozai, WHERE ARE YOU?!

Aang's voice echoes through the empty room.

**END OF ACT THREE** *

## ACT FOUR

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL - DAY**

On THE SUN: As the slightest sliver of Moon begins to darken its edge, the initial stage of the eclipse begins.

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL CITY - HILLSIDE - DAY**

Sokka and the invasion forces have taken control of the tower area, and just passed through to begin their ascent up the hillside to the Royal Palace. As Sokka takes everything in, he notices Katara and Hakoda crossing through the tower entrance to catch up with them.

SOKKA
Dad! You're on your feet again.

HAKODA
Thanks to your sister. I'm in no shape to fight, but maybe there's some way I can help.

SOKKA
Everything's going smoothly -- and the eclipse hasn't even kicked in yet.

HAKODA
Let's hope our luck holds out. Katara, you seem distracted, is something wrong?

KATARA
Yeah... is that... is that Aang?

SOKKA
What?

They all look up and see Aang approaching on his glider.

They all look worried for a beat as Aang flies in and lands.

SOKKA (cont'd)
Please tell me you're here because the Firelord turned out to be a big wimp and you didn't even need the eclipse to take him down.

AANG
He wasn't home -- no one was. The entire palace city is abandoned.

Sokka takes this in -- this is devastating news.

SOKKA
They knew.

Aang nods.

AANG
It's over. The Firelord is probably long gone, far away on some remote island where he'll be safe during the eclipse.

SOKKA
No... my instincts tell me he wouldn't go too far. He would have a secret bunker, somewhere he could go and be safe during a siege -- but still be close enough to lead his nation.

TOPH
If it's an underground secret bunker we're looking for, I'm just the girl to find it.

Sokka pulls out an UNUSUAL TIMING DEVICE, the Mechanist's version of an hourglass -- a small, graduated glass container, with fabric slowly soaking up India ink.

SOKKA
The Mechanist gave me this timing device -- it looks like we've got about ten minutes until the full eclipse. Ten minutes to find the Firelord.

AANG
We can still do this... we can still win the day.

KATARA
Wait. If they knew we were coming, it could all be a trap. Maybe we should use the time we have left to make sure we all get out of here safely.

Sokka is affected by what Katara says. Now, Hakoda addresses Sokka.

HAKODA
Everyone who's here today came prepared to risk everything for this mission -- they know what's at stake. If there's still a chance, and there's still hope, I think they would want Aang to go for it.

Everyone looks to Sokka to decide. Sokka looks to Aang.

SOKKA
What do you think? You're the one that has to face the Firelord. Whatever you decide, I'm with you.

Aang looks at all his friends and allies, here to support him -- and counting on him.

AANG
I've got to try...

**EXT. BASE OF VOLCANIC CRATER - MINUTES LATER**

At the base of the crater on which the Firelord's palace is built, Appa lands carrying Aang, Sokka, and Toph. Toph dismounts, and as soon as she hits the ground she senses something.

AANG
Do you feel anything down there?

TOPH
Yup! There are natural tunnels criss-crossing through the inside of the volcano.

SOKKA
Anything else? Is there a structure somewhere?

Toph does a SONAR MOVE, stomping the ground sharply, and then spreading her hands and ear to the ground to detect the returning vibrations.

TOPH
There's something big, dense, and made of metal deep in the heart of the volcano.

SOKKA
Sounds like a secret bunker to me!

Toph bends an entrance in the side of the crater (accessing a tunnel). Aang says goodbye to Appa.

AANG
Stay safe -- we'll be back soon.

Aang, Toph, and Sokka head into the volcano.

**INT. VOLCANO - NATURAL TUNNELS - CONTINUOUS**

The threesome dashes through the complicated and twisty tunnel system, which is possibly dimly illuminated by ambient magma.

TOPH
This way! That one's a dead end.

SOKKA
What would we do without you?

TOPH
Perish in burning hot magma.

SOKKA
Yup, pretty much.

They follow her down the next tunnel. Soon they emerge into a "clearing."

**INT. VOLCANO - GEYSER FIELD - CONTINUOUS**

As they exit the tunnel into the big open space, they stop.

TOPH
The tunnel continues on the other side -- and it leads right to the bunker!

It's a huge cavern, the floor of which is pockmarked with holes and crevices through which HOT LAVA glows brightly. It's like a minefield, with occasionally erupting GEYSER BLASTS (of hot steam and smoke) and also LAVA BURSTS as lava bubbles pop and spit magma out.

SOKKA
We'll have to be fast, but careful.

Sokka dashes out into the cavern, but there's a sudden LAVA BURST right where he's headed -- Aang quickly Airbends it away, saving Sokka.

AANG
How was that careful?

SOKKA
I was wrong -- we need to be fast, careful, and lucky.

The group makes their way across, with a couple more close calls -- but they get to the other side where they reach the mouth of the other tunnel...

**INT. VOLCANO - MOUTH OF LAVA RIVER TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS**

... only to discover that the floor of this tunnel isn't ground, but a FLOWING RIVER OF LAVA.

SOKKA
There's no floor -- it's just a river of lava!

Aang opens up his glider.

AANG
Climb aboard, and hold on tight.

Sokka and Toph cling to Aang, and he flies in...

**INT. VOLCANO - LAVA RIVER TUNNEL - CONTINUOUS**

As Toph and Sokka cling to Aang for dear life, he perilously flies through the tunnel above the SIZZLING, SMOKING, and SPARKING lava! It's a tight flight, and his friends are heavy -- and Sokka looks terrified as Aang occasionally DIPS a little too close for comfort towards the magma.

A HOT SPARK catches on the glider wing near Toph.

Aang flies faster through the tunnel... and finally reaches the BUNKER ENTRANCE.

**INT. OUTSIDE BUNKER ENTRANCE - CONTINUOUS**

They land, and safely extinguish the fire. (NOTE: From here on out, Aang's new glider has MINOR BURN DAMAGE but it doesn't affect functionality.) Now they face an incredibly daunting looking LOCKED METAL DOOR.

SOKKA
That's some door.

TOPH
Not a problem.

Toph deftly opens the door, using either "pure" Metalbending, or getting an assist from her space-metal bracelet.

SOKKA
I am so glad we added you to the group.

The kids enter the bunker.

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL CITY - HILLSIDE - SIMULTANEOUS**

The invasion forces, now being led by Bato, battle their way up the hillside promenade toward the royal palace.

ANGLE ON: THE SUN, now about HALFWAY COVERED by the Moon.

A FIRE NATION COMMANDER notices the progressing eclipse, and barks an order to his men.

FIRE NATION COMMANDER
Retreat! Everyone move to the secondary defensive position! RETREAT!

As the Fire Nation forces disengage, and begin fleeing up the promenade, Bato addresses the invasion forces.

BATO
The eclipse is only minutes away. We should be able to make it up the hill by the time it starts -- and secure the entire palace by the time it's finished!

INVASION FORCES
(CHEERS)

They begin a more STEADY MARCH (compared to the rapidly fleeing Fire Nation forces) up the hill, warriors and benders alongside the tanks. Hakoda LAGS in the rear, with Katara.

KATARA
We can wait here if you want.

HAKODA
No... I want to press forward with the others.

Katara helps him move up the hill.

**INT. BUNKER - HALLWAY - SIMULTANEOUS**

A Fire Nation official, whom we recognize as the War Minister (from 1.17 And 2.13) strolls casually down the hall.

WAR MINISTER
(CASUAL HUMMING OR WHISTLING -- ABRUPT SURPRISED SOUND)

He turns a corner and is suddenly face to face with Sokka, Toph and Aang -- all in cool and intimidating poses.

WAR MINISTER (cont'd)
(cowardly)
The Firelord's chamber is that way! Down the hall, to the left, and up the stairs, you can't miss it!

AANG
Thanks!

The kids run off in the direction he indicated. The War Minister looks both ways to make sure no one saw him, then quickly shuffles away.

**INT. BUNKER - OUTSIDE COMMAND CHAMBER - MOMENTS LATER**

The kids come running up to the GRAND ENTRANCE to the Firelord's command chamber. Sokka pulls out the mechanists's timing device.

SOKKA
Only thirty seconds until the total eclipse!

Aang folds up his staff, and looks more determined than ever before.

AANG
I'm ready. I'm ready to face the Firelord.

They open the grand door, and Aang enters the command chamber.

**INT. BUNKER - COMMAND CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS**

As Aang enters, he looks to the other side of the room. There, seated on the throne is AZULA, not the Firelord. She's cool and calm as ever.

AZULA
So you are alive after all. I had a hunch that you survived -- but it doesn't matter, I've known about the invasion for months.

**INT. BUNKER - OUTSIDE NONDESCRIPT DOORWAY - SIMULTANEOUS**

Prince Zuko stands before another door.

ZUKO
I'm ready to face you.

He opens the door, and enters the chamber.

**INT. BUNKER - SECRET CHAMBER - CONTINUOUS**

Zuko enters the room to find his father, Firelord Ozai.

FIRELORD OZAI
Prince Zuko? What are you doing here?

Zuko doesn't answer immediately, but just looks his father in the eye.

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL**

On THE SUN: The Moon covers the last sliver of the Sun, and we begin the TOTAL ECLIPSE.

**END OF ACT FOUR**

## ACT FIVE

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL - HILLSIDE**

Everything is dark and eerie as the total eclipse has begun. The invasion forces are close to the palace. The Mechanist shouts to the others.

MECHANIST
The eclipse is starting! Put on your eclipse glasses!

The invasion forces put on special protective ECLIPSE GLASSES that the Mechanist has made them so that they can look at the eclipse safely. Meanwhile, so do the members of our television audience who have participated in the promotion.

We see Katara (who is with Hakoda) put on her eclipse glasses, and look up at the eclipse...

(We should discuss this promotion/marketing thing -- but if we decide not to do it, we will replace this with a similar short scene of the good guys observing the start of the eclipse.)

**SPECIAL SHOT**

ANGLE ON: The Sun. Viewers in our television audience who are not wearing the glasses see an eerie shot of the Moon covering the Sun. Those with glasses can see: YUE in the center of the Moon.

**INT. BUNKER - SECRET CHAMBER - MOMENTS LATER**

Ozai is surprised to see Zuko.

FIRELORD OZAI
Why are you here?

ZUKO
I'm here to tell the truth.

FIRELORD OZAI
Telling the truth during the middle of an eclipse? This should be interesting.

Ozai sits down at a makeshift throne.

ZUKO
First of all, in Ba Sing Se it was Azula who took down the Avatar -- not me.

FIRELORD OZAI
Why would she lie to me about that?

ZUKO
Because the Avatar's not dead -- he survived.

FIRELORD OZAI
What?!

ZUKO
In fact, he's probably leading this invasion -- he could be on his way here right now.

FIRELORD OZAI
(ENRAGED SCREAM) Get out! Get out of my sight right now if you know what's good for you.

Zuko doesn't flinch.

ZUKO
That's another thing -- I'm not taking orders from you anymore.

Ozai gets up and moves toward Zuko aggressively.

FIRELORD OZAI
You will obey me, or this defiant breath will be your last...

As he gets close, Zuko DRAWS his swords defensively.

ZUKO
Think again...

The Firelord backs down.

ZUKO (cont'd)
I am going to speak my mind. And you are going to listen.

The Firelord's eyes are filled with hatred, but he has no choice -- he is a captive audience.

**INT. BUNKER - COMMAND CHAMBER - SIMULTANEOUS**

In the grand command chamber, Azula faces Aang, Toph, and Sokka.

AANG
Where is he? Where's the Firelord?

AZULA
You mean I'm not good enough for you? You're hurting my feelings.

SOKKA
Stop wasting our time and give us the information. You're powerless right now, so you're in no position to refuse.

TOPH
And stick to the truth -- I'll be able to tell if you're lying.

AZULA
Are you sure? I'm a pretty good liar...
(straight face)
I am a four hundred foot tall purple platypus bear with pink horns and silver wings.

Azula waits a beat for Toph's response.

TOPH
Okay, you're good, I admit it.

But suddenly Toph bends some rock near Azula to form STONE SHACKLES and OTHER BONDS around her.

TOPH (cont'd)
(forceful)
But you really ought to consider telling the truth anyway.

Azula smiles, as the rock bonds Toph created DISINTEGRATE and DISSOLVE away from her. Azula casually WIPES the dust from her clothes. The kids are astounded and confused.

AZULA
When I left Ba Sing Se, I brought home some souvenirs -- Dai Li agents!

With that, two DAI LI AGENTS drop down from the roof of the chamber and ATTACK the kids! Aang sends a quick Airbending blast at Azula, but she expects it and DEFTLY DODGES it -- and so their big fight begins!

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL - ROYAL PALACE**

The eclipsed Sun above them, Bato and the other invasion forces arrive at the outskirts of the palace.

BATO
Surround the periphery! We have to secure the palace by the time the eclipse is over. Otherwise -- we'll be in for the fight of our lives.

As the forces begin to spread out, Tyro and (whoever he's with) encounter a small band of Firebenders who are stragglers.

TYRO
Stop! Surrender peacefully and we won't harm you.

The leader of the stragglers is defiant.

FIRE NATION SERGEANT
We'll never surrender!

He tries to do a Firebending move -- but it's completely INEFFECTUAL. He quickly changes his tune.

FIRE NATION SERGEANT (cont'd)
Okay we surrender.

Meanwhile, we see Katara and Hakoda catching up with Bato.

HAKODA
There it is, the Fire Nation Royal Palace. We've come so far.

KATARA
It's not over yet.

**INT. BUNKER - SECRET CHAMBER - SIMULTANEOUS**

Zuko addresses his father -- who is forced to listen, biting his tongue.

ZUKO
For so long, all I wanted was for you to love me -- to accept me. I thought it was my honor that I wanted -- but really, I was just trying to please you.

Zuko points his sword at his father, accusingly.

ZUKO (cont'd)
You -- my father, who banished me just for talking out of turn.
(MORE)

ZUKO (cont'd)
My father, who challenged me -- a thirteen year old boy -- to an agni kai. How can you possibly justify a duel with a child?

FIRELORD OZAI
It was to teach you respect.

ZUKO
It was cruel -- and it was wrong.

FIRELORD OZAI
Then you've learned nothing.

ZUKO
No -- I've learned everything! And I've had to learn it on my own.
(beat)
Growing up, we were taught that the Fire Nation was the greatest civilization in history, and somehow the war was our way of "sharing" our greatness with the rest of the world. What an amazing lie that was! The people of the world are terrified by the Fire Nation -- they don't see our greatness, they hate us -- and we deserve it.

Zuko pauses.

ZUKO (cont'd)
We've created an era of fear in the world. And if we don't want the world to destroy itself, we need to replace it with an era of peace, and kindness.

FIRELORD OZAI
(LAUGHS DERISIVELY) Your Uncle has gotten to you, hasn't he?

ZUKO
Yes.

Zuko smiles.

ZUKO (cont'd)
He has.

FIRELORD OZAI
(SCOWLS)

**INT. BUNKER - COMMAND CHAMBER - SIMULTANEOUS**

We return to the exciting and awesome fight between Aang, Toph and Sokka and Azula and her Dai Li agents. It's two benders and a non-bender versus two benders and a powerless bender, so while the fight still favors the Avatar's side, it's not entirely lop-sided. And besides, Azula's goal in the fight is not so much to win, but to use up all the Avatar's time.

Once both Dai Li agents have been subdued, Azula's defensive tactics are still strong -- she's fighting similarly to the way she fought Zuko in 2.01, ANTICIPATING and DODGING and PARRYING a lot. She's swift and clever and elusive.

AANG
I can't pin her down -- she's too quick!

Sokka realizes what's going on.

SOKKA
Wait! Aang, Toph -- stop attacking...

They stop, a bit perplexed by Sokka's request.

SOKKA (cont'd)
Don't you see what she's doing? She's just playing with us. She's not even trying to win this fight...

AZULA
Not true! I'm giving it my all.

TOPH
(to Azula)
You're trying to keep us here and waste all our time!

AZULA
Um, right -- I think your friend just said that, genius.
(rolls her eyes)
And since you can't see, I should tell you I'm rolling my eyes.

TOPH
I'll roll your whole head!

Toph begins to lunge toward her, but Sokka STOPS her.

SOKKA
She's just baiting you again!

Azula SMIRKS. Aang turns to his friends.

AANG
Okay, so what do we do, just ignore her?

SOKKA
We don't have a choice -- we just have to get out of here and find the Firelord on our own, somehow.

AZULA (O.S., OR IN B.G.)
It's a trap -- don't say I didn't warn you.

SOKKA
Ignore!

Still ignoring her, Sokka pulls out his timing device.

AZULA
So, Sokka's your name, right? My favorite prisoner used to mention you all the time...

Now she's gotten his attention. He turns to face her, despite himself.

AZULA (cont'd)
She was convinced you were going to come rescue her. Of course, you never came -- and she gave up on you.

Sokka loses control, and runs toward Azula. Aang tries to stop him, but he runs past anyway. As he CHARGES toward Azula, we see her stealthily unsheathe a small weapon -- Sokka's rushing to his own doom!

AZULA (cont'd)
(under her breath)
Come and get it...

At the last second, Toph GRABS Azula's hand using one of the defeated Dai Li agent's STONE HANDS to hold her wrist -- she DROPS the weapon. When Sokka reaches her, she's pinned and helpless. Sokka is SHAKING with emotion.

SOKKA
Where... is... Suki?

**INT. BUNKER - SECRET CHAMBER - SIMULTANEOUS**

Zuko faces his father still.

ZUKO
After I leave here today, I'm going to free Uncle Iroh from his prison. And I'm going to beg for his forgiveness -- he's the one who's been a real father to me.

FIRELORD OZAI
Oh, that's just beautiful, maybe he can pass down to you the ways of tea and failure.

ZUKO
But I've come to an even more important decision. I'm going to join the Avatar. And I'm going to help him defeat you.

The Firelord blanches.

FIRELORD OZAI
Really?

The Firelord SMIRKS -- and sits down calmly.

FIRELORD OZAI (cont'd)
Since you're a full-blown traitor now and you want me gone, why wait? I'm powerless -- you've got your swords -- why don't you just do it now?

Zuko shakes his head 'no.'

ZUKO
Because I know my own destiny. Taking you down is the Avatar's destiny.

Zuko sheathes his swords.

ZUKO (cont'd)
Goodbye.

He turns his back on his father.

FIRELORD OZAI
Coward! You think you're brave enough to face me, but you'll only do it during the eclipse. If you have any real courage you'll stick around until the Sun comes out.

Zuko doesn't turn around, he starts WALKING AWAY. The Firelord EASES back into his chair -- he is confident in his next tactic.

FIRELORD OZAI (cont'd)
Don't you want to know what happened to your mother?

He's got him -- Zuko STOPS. Zuko turns around to face his father again. The Firelord SMILES, knowing that he has his son where he wants him, and the eclipse is only moments away from ending.

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL**

The ECLIPSE is still technically TOTAL, but we can sense a slight movement of the Moon, and maybe the tiniest teasing sliver of the Sun beginning to emerge... the end of the eclipse is moments away.

**END OF ACT FIVE**

## ACT SIX

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL**

The eclipse is only moments (30 seconds or so) away from ending... just a peek of Sun.

**INT. BUNKER - SECRET CHAMBER - SIMULTANEOUS**

Ozai stands up and looks Zuko in the eye -- Zuko stares at him fiercely -- his swords are drawn, but held low -- he's listening.

ZUKO
What happened that night?

Ozai delights in telling the story because he knows how painful it is for Zuko to hear it.

FIRELORD OZAI
My father, Firelord Azulon had commanded me to do the unthinkable... to you, my own son. And I was going to do it.

Zuko SWALLOWS HARD, this hurts to hear it.

FIRELORD OZAI (cont'd)
Your mother found out, and swore she would protect you at any cost. She knew I wanted the throne, and she proposed a plan -- a plan in which I would become Firelord, and your life would be spared.

**INT. BUNKER - COMMAND CHAMBER - SIMULTANEOUS**

Sokka stands above Azula, pinned by Toph with Dai Li hands. Azula just stares back at Sokka silently, without blinking.

SOKKA
Where's Suki? Answer me!

Azula just glares.

AANG
Sokka... she won't talk.

SOKKA
Where are you keeping her?

**INT. BUNKER - SECRET CHAMBER - SIMULTANEOUS**

The Firelord continues describing the night to Zuko.

FIRELORD OZAI
Your mother did vicious, treasonous things that night. She knew the consequences and accepted them... for her treason, she was banished.

Zuko's eyes widen and TEARS stream down his face.

ZUKO
So she's alive!

FIRELORD OZAI
Perhaps.

The Firelord stands up now.

FIRELORD OZAI (cont'd)
Now I realize that banishment is far too merciful a penalty for treason. Your penalty will be far steeper.

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL**

OUTSIDE: The eclipse ENDS, as the Sun begins EMERGING and we see RAYS BURST FORTH.

**INT. BUNKER - SECRET CHAMBER - SIMULTANEOUS**

The Firelord faces his son, and launches the biggest and brightest bolt of LIGHTNING we have ever seen directly at Zuko!

But when the lightning reaches Zuko, he confidently performs the LIGHTNING REDIRECT move that Uncle taught him but with SWORDS DRAWN, using one sword to CHANNEL IN and the other to CHANNEL OUT, and successfully sends the lightning back in the direction it came from. It strikes NEAR the Firelord, causing a huge and THUNDEROUS EXPLOSION which causes the structure to begin collapsing around him.

Now Zuko turns, to make his escape...

**INT. BUNKER - COMMAND CHAMBER - SIMULTANEOUS**

We can hear the DISTANT EXPLOSION echoing and RUMBLING up here. Azula (still being interrogated) immediately brightens.

AZULA
Oh, it sounds like the Firebending's back on.

Using her pinned arms for leverage, Azula does an awesome two-leg Firebending kick at Toph -- the POWERFUL BLUE BURST throws Toph off balance just enough that she loses her Earthbending grip on Azula.

AZULA (cont'd)
Dad's all the way at the end of the hall, then down a secret stairway on the left. I'm sure he'd be more than happy to see you now.

Azula releases a heavy BARRAGE of fire and explosions, creating chaos and putting the kids on the defensive. Then she escapes through a rear exit.

Sokka is furious with himself.

SOKKA
I fell for it! I used up all our time.

TOPH
It's not your fault, Sokka. Azula was ready for us -- she had every move planned out.

SOKKA
And now it's too late...

AANG
Maybe it's not too late. The eclipse is over -- but I could face the Firelord anyway.

SOKKA
No. I don't think that's a good idea.

AANG
But I'm ready! I came here with a job to do, and everyone's counting on me.

TOPH
The Firelord knew we were coming this time --- we thought we had surprise on our side, but we didn't. It just wasn't our day. What we need to do now is go help our friends.

AANG
I guess you guys are right.

SOKKA
You'll have another chance -- I know you will.

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL**

Only a PARTIAL ECLIPSE now.

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL - ROYAL PALACE**

Bato stands with Hakoda and Katara -- the other forces are still somewhat spread out, surrounding the palace.

BATO
What should we do, Hakoda? Shouldn't something have happened by now?

HAKODA
I don't know. But, now that the eclipse is over I expect we're going to see some Firebenders any minute.

Katara looks down. Then it happens. From behind the caldera, all around the invasion forces, WAR BALLOONS begin rising up into the air -- the same as the war balloon we saw in episode 1.17, only the hot air in each of these is powered by a Firebender. Katara and the others stare in awe. The Mechanist looks horrified.

MECHANIST
My own invention... oh, this is terrible.

Then, even more impressive -- larger, more heavily armed ZEPPELINS rise up too. The trap is sprung. As the balloons and zeppelins approach, the invasion forces regather into a group. Then they see Appa...

KATARA
They're back!

Appa lands carrying Aang, Sokka, and Toph. Katara looks up at Aang hopefully -- a disappointed Aang shakes his head 'No.'

SOKKA
It was all a trap. Azula knew we were coming and she's plotted out every move.

He looks to the approaching balloons and zeppelins.

SOKKA (cont'd)
We've just got to get to the beach as fast as we can. If we can make it to the submarines, maybe we can get away safely.

AANG
They've got air power -- but so do I. I'm going to do what I can to slow them down.

Aang opens his glider.

APPA
(BELLOWS)

KATARA
Appa, you and me can help too.

With that, Appa and Katara, and Aang take off into the skies.

SOKKA
Everyone, let's get back to the subs!

They all begin rushing down the hillside.

**EXT. SKY ABOVE FIRE NATION CAPITAL - MOMENTS LATER**

Katara and Appa take on a balloon. Exciting, daring, challenging -- but they take it out.

Aang takes on a war balloon too.

Maybe another one is taken out somehow. (More details, and dialog to be added!)

Then perhaps they take on a zeppelin together. The defenses of the zeppelin are much more significant -- and its firepower (including rockets!) much more impressive. Maybe they take it down -- maybe they don't. But overall, there are too many air vehicles and many of them are getting past Aang and Katara.

KATARA
We can't keep them all back! There are too many of them!

AANG
Let's join the others!

They turn to fly back to the invasion group.

**EXT. PRISON TOWER - DAY**

At the prison tower where Uncle is kept, Prince Zuko comes running up to the entrance. He's greeted by an unusual sight: there's rubble and considerable damage to the prison. There's been a big fight here recently. Zuko dashes inside.

ZUKO
Uncle!

**INT. PRISON TOWER - DAY**

As Zuko makes his way inside, the path he follows is strewn with beaten up guards and damaged walls etc. When he reaches Uncle's cell, it's busted open -- and Uncle's gone. Lying on the ground nearby is Warden Poon. Zuko props him up and demands to know what happened.

ZUKO
Where is my Uncle?

WARDEN POON
He's gone. He busted himself out --
I've never seen anything like it.
He was like a one man army...

Zuko drops Warden Poon, and leaves.

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL CITY - HILLSIDE - DAY**

The forces have reached the tower area, when Katara and Aang catch back up with them. The war balloons and zeppelins are close behind.

SOKKA
Try and find cover! I think we're
about to see some bombs...

As everyone scrambles, the first wave of aircraft passes over -- DARK SHADOWS move ominously over them. There are a few moments of suspense and anticipation as we wait for the bombardment to start. Then the Firestorm begins -- as BOMBS drop, and fire literally rains down. Using whatever's around them for cover -- and with the Earthbenders in the group bending SHIELDS and SHELTERS -- the group endures the wave. But as the aircraft pass, they keep going...

KATARA
Why aren't they turning around to
attack us again?

AANG
They're headed for the beach.
(realizing)
They're going to destroy the submarines!

SOKKA
How are we all going to escape?

HAKODA
We're not.

It's a somber moment.

SOKKA
Then our only choice is to stand and fight. We have the Avatar -- we could still win.

HAKODA
Yes, with the Avatar we could still win -- on another day. You kids have to leave. You have to escape on Appa together.

KATARA
What? We can't leave you behind -- we won't leave anyone behind!

HAKODA
You're our only chance in the long run. You and Sokka have to go with Aang somewhere safe. It's the only way to keep hope alive.

BATO
The youngest of our group should go with you -- the adults will stay behind and surrender. We'll be prisoners -- but we will all survive this battle.

TYRO
I've got some experience with Fire Nation prisons. It's not going to be easy, but we'll get by.

SOKKA
They're at the beach already.

We see the balloons and zeppelins fly over the submarines. Bombs drop, blowing them to smithereens. Everyone begins loading on Appa, including Haru, Teo, and the Duke.

MECHANIST
Bye, son.

TEO
Bye, Dad. I'm really proud of you.

Pipsqueak helps the Duke aboard Appa.

THE DUKE
I'll miss you, Pipsqueak.

PIPSQUEAK
Take care, the Duke.

Tyro gives Haru a manly kiss on the cheek.

HARU
We'll be back for you, Dad.

TYRO
If we don't escape on our own first!

Hakoda says goodbye to his kids.

HAKODA
We lost today, but we've never been this close -- we tasted victory, and that counts for something.

KATARA
(humorous but warm)
We'll miss you, Dad.

She gives him a strong HUG. Sokka joins the hug too.

SOKKA
Bye, Dad. We won't be apart for too long this time -- I promise.

Before they take off, Aang speaks to everyone.

AANG
Thank you all for being so brave and so strong. I'm going to make this up to you...

Aang takes off on his glider, and Appa takes off next. Everyone waves goodbye as their loved ones fade into the distance.

**EXT. SKY ABOVE FIRE NATION CAPITAL - MOMENTS LATER**

Aang and Appa (with passengers) have to make a daring escape, weaving through the Fire Nation's aerial armada, and dodging Firebending shots and rockets launched from the zeppelins. As they break past the main group into clear airspace, we see Azula aboard the flagship zeppelin watching them go.

FIRE NATION OFFICER
Should we follow them, Princess?

AZULA
No -- they're too fast, but it doesn't matter. They'll be back.

Meanwhile on Appa, the kids look back. Aang flies beside them.

AANG
I know just the place for us to go where we'll be safe for awhile -- the Western Air Temple.

As they fly off in that direction, and begin to fly off into the distance, we see that they are being FOLLOWED by a lone War Balloon. As we CLOSE IN on the balloon, we see it is being piloted by Prince Zuko.

**EXT. FIRE NATION CAPITAL**

The show ends as it began, as the last sliver of Moon disappears from the Sun's surface, and the eclipse is over.

**END OF SHOW**